

MONGOLIAN STATE ALUMNI MAGAZINE

VOL.9 September – December, 2012

STATE ALUMNI | your global community
www.alumni.state.gov



Please join the Global State Alumni Community at www.alumni.state.gov where you can meet and stay in touch with fellow alumni from all over the world; hear about alumni news and activities; learn about job and grant opportunities; access over 1000 academic and prominent journals and periodicals; and share your stories and participate in global discussions. The State Alumni website is an exclusive community network only for the U.S.G alumni to ensure that your exchange experience does not stop when you return home, but continues to result in productive professional, societal, cultural, and community engagements.

Mongolian Association of State Alumni (MASA) was established in September 2007 as a community of all past and current Mongolian participants of U.S. Government sponsored exchange programs. Since 1989 more than 700 Mongolians have participated in U.S. Government sponsored programs and you are a welcome member of this family.

MASA Mission is to contribute to the bilateral relationships of Mongolia and the U.S. and promote the efforts of Mongolian U.S. Government alumni for societal and community development.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Alumni News

- 2 ALUMNA GIVES BACK
Initiating Mongolia's first Touch Tour for the blind
- 3 ART OF CARING
USAID's children's art exhibit and interviews with the Paralympians
- 4 U.S. EMBASSY SUPPORTS ALUMNI
Initiatives and collaboration across countries
- 6 ALDARMAA SUKHBAATAR
A SUSI story
- 7 NORMAN ROCKWELL ART EXHIBIT
Announcement and essay competition
- 8 ETHICS FOR A CONNECTED WORLD
Carnegie Council's trans-Pacific student contest
- 8 SUSI 2013
For women student leaders

Alumni Spotlight

- 9 MONGOLIAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE ALUMNI
Triggering change with its project

Exchange Reflections

- 11 SUSI
Stories

D.JARGALSAIKHAN

Current president of the Mongolian Association of State Alumni (MASA), Economist, Defacto program host, USAID Masters' Program alumnus, 2002.



ALUMNA GIVES BACK

Initiating Mongolia's first Touch Tour for the blind



English Access Microscholarship Program students taking part in Mongolia's first Museum Touch Tour.

On September 28, 2012, Mongolia's first museum touch tour for the blind took place at the Museum of Natural History (MNH). In July 2012, Ms. Myandas J., Manager of MNH, participated in an International Visitor Leadership Program on museum management in the U.S. During her IV program, Myandas was impressed by the variety of programs American museums offer to their patrons and their innovative ways of bringing art to all.

Inspired by her experience, Myandas came up with the idea of doing a touch tour for the blind to allow them to experience the museum's exhibits. Immediately upon her return she approached the embassy about organizing such a tour, with the intention that the first beneficiaries be the blind students in our English Access Microscholarship Program for the visually impaired (a two-year intensive English teaching program).

Less than two months since her return from the IV program, Ms. Myandas and the staff of MNH welcomed about 20 blind and visually impaired students and the director and teachers from school 116, Mongolia's only school for the blind, to their museum. During the tour, the

participants were able to touch real dinosaur bones and models of dinosaurs, as well as rocks, relief maps and Mongolian wildlife that they have never seen and that usually cannot be touched by museum guests.

In order to make the tour more interesting to the students, the museum staff had prepared sound effects of dinosaurs and other animals and the museum curators provided information and answered questions about the museum exhibits and about Mongolian nature and wildlife in general.

This was the first time such a program had ever been organized in the history of Mongolian museums and MNH hopes to inspire other museums and similar art organizations to make their services more "inclusive" by their example. Myandas said, "It is just a question of awareness. Once I learned American museums offer programs for the blind, I thought why we can't do this as well. Art can be experienced in many different ways. We just need to find out what way works best for whom." The program was a great success and the museum intends to offer it to other groups in the future.

ART OF CARING HIGHLIGHTS

USAID's children's art exhibit and interviews with Paralympians

In support of the Hour against Hate campaign and the 2012 summer Paralympics, the U.S. Embassy and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) jointly organized an art exhibit titled "Art of Caring." The exhibit opened on September 20 at the 976 Art Gallery. Art of Caring is an exhibition of artwork by children in Arhangai in support of the rights of persons with disabilities. Asked how they would promote inclusiveness, the children produced beautiful pieces of art in celebration of the contributions of the disabled to their communities, Mongolian society, and the world at large.

"The Art of Caring" exhibit ran through October 04, 2012, at the 976 Art Gallery courtesy of Max Mall and of Ms. Gantuya, the owner of the gallery and a Fulbright alumna. The children's art was produced through USAID's "Fostering an Inclusive Environment for Local Disabled (FIELD)" project.

People with Disabilities are one of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in Mongolia. USAID's FIELD project,

implemented by Mercy Corps, helped to address the needs and interests of Mongolian people with disabilities and to assist the country in fulfilling the human rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, ratified by the Mongolian Government in 2009.

The exhibit opening reception featured six Mongolian Paralympians, including a gold medal winner from the Beijing Paralympics. The exhibit also took place in anticipation of October, the international month for promoting employment for people with disabilities. The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy interviewed the paralympians about their experiences and about the importance of employment for people with disabilities. We posted these interviews one at a time each week on our Facebook page. In order to view interviews, visit: <http://youtu.be/user/USAinMongolia>

We invite you to share with us your thoughts and ideas for improving employment for people with disabilities via our Facebook and Twitter.



Ambassador Campbell is making speech at the opening reception of the "Art of Caring," art exhibit.

U.S. EMBASSY SUPPORTS ALUMNI

Initiatives and collaboration across countries

In October of 2011, the U.S. Embassy and the Mongolian Association of State Alumni (MASA) organized a regional alumni conference for alumni associations and groups from the EAP region. The conference gathered more than 50 alumni from 12 different countries, and during the conference the U.S. Embassy held a project competition to promote regional collaboration among alumni. Participants were divided into four different groups according to their interests, and a youth alumni group won the competition. The prize was a grant of and \$2000 to carry out a project titled AGAIN (Alumni enGagement In Nations) in which the group members would carry out an event to engage and motivate either fellow alumni in their country or youth in their communities. We are pleased to present brief synopses of some of the project activities implemented by the AGAIN team.

English books, notebooks and DVDs to the school. The materials were purchased with funding from the U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbaatar.



Burma education fair speakers at the fair.

Burma: On September 2, 2012, Myanmar alumni held a U.S. Education Fair. Mr. Aung Naing Win, a member of the AGAIN team, organized the fair in collaboration with the Myanmar alumni association MUSFEX. The event gathered more than 100 alumni. Students and alumni from various programs gave presentations and held panel discussions about studying in the U.S. The Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon, Ms. Virginia Murray attended the fair which was followed by an alumni reception.



Mr. Daisuke Iwase who spoke about his experience of studying at Harvard.

Japan: On September 8, 2012, Japanese SUSI alumni motivated Japanese youth to "go global." Ms. Haruka Rai,



At the one day event titled "YES (TA) We Share" for the U.S. Independence Day

Thailand: On July 4, 2012, Thai Alumni donated educational materials to students in a region hit by the flood. Mr. Yutthakrit Chalermthai, a member of the AGAIN team, in collaboration with more than 40 other alumni organized a one day event to benefit 150 Muslim students at Baan Klong Takien Moo 2 School in Ayutthaya Province which was affected by the flood last year. The event consisted of a series of activities, including a presentation on "U.S. Independence Day" and "Muslim life in America." During the event Yutthakrit donated educational materials such as

a member of the AGAIN team, organized a youth workshop for more than 120 Japanese high school students and SUSI program alumni to stimulate an interest in studying abroad. The event, entitled “Feel Japan in the World,” started with a motivational presentation by Mr. Daisuke Iwase who spoke about his experience studying at Harvard. This was followed by a very lively discussion among Japanese, American and other high school studying in Japan. The students discussed the value and importance of studying abroad.

Vietnam: On September 15-22, 2012, Vietnamese Alumni Organized a “Drive Green Campaign.” Ms. Tran Thi Thanh Van, a member of the AGAIN team, in collaboration with the Vietnamese alumni association and the Hanoi University Student Club, organized a week-long campaign to raise environmental awareness among students of Hanoi University and to encourage them to “drive green.” As part of the campaign, students were asked to do a “motorbike pool” where two students shared one bike to go to school. Pocket-sized leaflets and posters promoting ways of saving energy and reducing pollution were distributed among students and hung in all the classrooms of Hanoi University. The campaign reached more than 6000 students through classroom lectures, Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/GreenHanuers>, and Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ukx98m6FU8Y> and leaflet, sticker and poster distribution. This event not only helped to raise environmental awareness among students, but also helped noticeably reduce traffic around the university. The Vietnamese alumni association and Hanoi University hope to make this an annual campaign.

Cambodia: On September 30, 2012, Alumni Encouraged youth to “think outside the box.” Ms. Srun Sovan, a member of the AGAIN team, in collaboration with the Cambodia alumni community organized a month-long mentorship program followed by a one-day seminar on the importance of being one’s self and finding one’s own identity and of respecting others perspectives. The program -- think outside the box -- aimed to encourage young university students to learn to think creatively, whether to solve community problems or in their own reactions to the outside environment. The project selected a group of 12 students who wanted to experiment with going against convention and matched them with a mentor from the alumni. They were given a guidance seminar at the beginning of the project and were asked to experiment with “going against convention” for one month. At the end of the 30 days, the participants gathered for a final seminar where they shared and reflected on their experiences. During the seminar, the participants listened to presentations about successful people

who made a difference by daring to be different and by going against convention. These examples included Bruce Lee, Steve Jobs and many more. At the end of the seminar, all students were given The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do and How to Change by Charles Duhigg.



A Day of a Teen Mother, photo exhibit at the American Corner, Ulaanbaatar.

Mongolia: On November 8, 2012, Alumni highlighted women’s issues: five alumni of the SUSI Women Leaders program organized a photo exhibit titled “A Day of a Teen Mother” at the new program room of the American Corner. The purpose of the exhibit was to shed light on the many difficulties and prejudices girls face when they become mothers at a young age. The five girls who organized the exhibit are all university students who participated in the summer exchange program on women’s leadership. They were inspired by what they learned during the program. In organizing the exhibit, the SUSI alumni collaborated with the Princess Center, a NGO that works in support of teen-age girls and mothers, during the exhibit, the Princess center organized an educational workshop for other NGOs and civil society organizations as well as the public about women’s issues concerning young girls.



Five alumni of the SUSI Women Leader program raised women’s issues.

ALDARMAA SUKHBAATAR

A SUSI story

The U.S. Embassy is striving to expand its educational outreach to more rural parts of Mongolia and recruit students and professionals from outside UB to take part in our exchange programs. As such, we were delighted to receive an application for our SUSI for Secondary Educators program (a 6-week professional exchange/training program for teachers) from an educational professional in sukhbaatar province.

Ms. Aldarmaa is a teacher trainer at the department of education in Sukhbaatar and she participated in SUSI program in June 2012 in the U.S. 29 teachers from 25 different countries of the world took part in the SUSI program and Ms. Aldarmaa said "SUSI program was one of the best experiences of my life and I was inspired in so many ways and found so many ideas during the program."

As soon as she came back from the program, Aldarmaa recruited two Peace Corps volunteers and 8 fellow teachers and established a foundation called Awesome Sukhbaatar. She said the purpose of the foundation is to improve English language skills of the students and the teachers in the province and to promote social entrepreneurship and leadership motivations among students and young professionals in the province. Each of the ten board members of the foundation donates 20,000 MNT every month to the foundation and the foundation aims to fund at least one project each month.

The foundation so far has organized/funded two projects. In September 2012, the foundation in collaboration with two local secondary schools organized an essay contest among students about father's role in insuring family welfare and happiness. They received more than 100 essays both in English and in Mongolian. Following the contest, the foundation invited guest speakers from the capital city and organized a one-day family value workshop with 70 fathers of the contest participants.



At the family value workshop with teachers and fathers of the contest participants.

In October 2012, the foundation also sponsored a seminar for all the teachers in Sukhbaatar province. All 36 English teachers from the 14 secondary schools of the province came and attended this seminar during which Ms. Aldarmaa gave a presentation about the SUSI program and the places she visited when she was in the U.S. Aldarmaa mentioned that during the seminar all the teachers agreed that the biggest challenge for improving English teaching in rural parts like Sukhbaatar province is lack of professional trainings for rural teachers and inability to take TOEFL in their province. They said if the teachers could take TOEFL in their province without having to travel to Ulaanbaatar, the teachers would have more chance of succeeding at TOEFL and would have an increased chance of participating in scholarship and exchange programs.

Aldarmaa looks forward to collaborating with the U.S. Embassy on promoting English language teaching and learning in her province and plans to develop proposals for joint projects to support this goal. She has already started taking steps for promoting networking for the students and the teachers in her province.

In collaboration with a fellow SUSI program participant from Norway, Aldarmaa started an email pen pal program among the students of her province and Norway. She plans to expand this by recruiting all the teachers who attended the SUSI program to involve their students as well. She hopes to organize chats, discussions and debates among the students and the teachers through video conferencing.

"Visiting America and seeing The Statue of Liberty was my



dream. But, from my experience from participating in the SUSI program, I learned that if you work hard enough, your dream comes true and I want my fellow teachers and students to understand this as well."

- Aldarmaa

NORMAN ROCKWELL ART EXHIBIT

Announcement and essay competition

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of U.S.-Mongolian Diplomatic relations, the U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbaatar announces Youth Essay Contest in conjunction with its opening of "Norman Rockwell's America" exhibit at the Red Ger Gallery in Khan Bank, Seoul Street, November 8 - December 5, 2012.

Norman Rockwell is an American artist who was active in the first half of the 20th century. He was famous for painting covers of the magazine The Saturday Evening Post magazine, illustrating 322 covers in total. He celebrated life in America by painting scenes of everyday events. His painting also celebrated American ideals such as freedom and equality, and he did not shy away from painting scenes of controversy, when he wanted to draw public attention to an important issue.

In 1943, inspired by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's address to Congress, Rockwell painted the Four Freedoms paintings. They were reproduced in four consecutive issues of

The Saturday Evening Post with essays by contemporary writers. Rockwell's interpretations of *Freedom of Speech*, *Freedom to Worship*, *Freedom From Want* and *Freedom From Fear* proved to be enormously popular.

Norman Rockwell's America, an art exhibit of reproduction canvases, is free and open to the public from 9:00AM-6:00PM.

Young people between the ages 14-24 are invited to participate by submitting an essay responding to the following: Pick one to three Norman Rockwell paintings, and use them to compare & contrast American values with Mongolian values. Entries can be in English or in Mongolian and no longer than 2,000 words.

Submission deadline: November 30, 2012.

Send your essay to: pao@usembassy.mn

First Place and Runner-up essays will win special prizes, and will be published through our social media channels.



NORMAN ROCKWELL'S AMERICA

ETHICS FOR A CONNECTED WORLD

Carnegie Council's trans-Pacific student contest

Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs announces its first Trans-Pacific Student Contest, a unique experiment in U.S.-Asia collaboration. The contest is part of Ethics for a Connected World, a three-year global education project to mark the Council's 2014 Centennial. Winners will receive a trip to New York City. The contest will be conducted via Carnegie Council's online Global Ethics Network, a social media platform for people across the world who are committed to exploring the role of ethics in international affairs through joint projects, ongoing dialogues, and the creation of collaborative multimedia resources.

ESSAY OR VIDEO TOPIC: What is the greatest ethical challenge facing U.S.-Asia relations or the U.S. and one of the Asian countries listed below? Please use specific examples or stories to illustrate your points.

CONTEST REQUIREMENTS: Each entry must be collaboration between an American student and a student from one of the following: Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, North Korea, Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, or Vietnam.

The contest is open to undergraduate and postgraduate students only, and entries must be in English. Essays should be written in op-ed style (not academic, footnoted papers) with a length of 2,000-3,000 words. Videos should not exceed 10 minutes.

COMPETITION DEADLINE: April 30, 2013

CONTEST PRIZE: Contest winners will receive a free trip to New York City in November 2013, to attend a 3-day Carnegie Council Global Ethics Network Annual Meeting.

HOW TO ENTER:

1. Join the free Global Ethics Network (GEN) website: www.globoethicsnetwork.org.
2. Post your essay in the blog section and tag it with #ConnectedWorld; or
3. Upload your video here in one of the supported formats and tag it with #ConnectedWorld.
4. Please include your full name, address, email, age, and school affiliation.

If you have questions, please contact Evan O'Neil at eoeneil@glossercceia.org

This contest was made possible by a generous grant from the Henry Luce Foundation. The Henry Luce Foundation was established in 1936 by the late Henry R. Luce, co-founder and editor-in-chief of Time Inc., to honor his parents who were missionary educators in China. The Foundation seeks to bring important ideas to the center of American life, strengthen international understanding, and foster innovation and leadership in academic, policy, religious and art communities.

SUSI for Women Student Leaders

The U.S. Embassy is pleased to announce a summer student leadership exchange program for female university students. The Study of U.S. Institutes on Women Leadership is a 5-6 week leadership program that will take place in the U.S. from June 22 to July 27, 2013. We invite female students in their first, second, and third year in university/college in any part of Mongolia to apply for this program. The application deadline is 17:00, December 20, 2013.

In order to apply for the program, please fill out the 2013 candidate application form for SUSI on Women Leadership and submit via pasexchanges@usembassy.mn by 17:00, December 20, 2012. Please go to: http://mongolia.usembassy.gov/susi_2013.html to download the application form and get more information about the program and candidate requirement.

MONGOLIAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE ALUMNI

Triggering change with its project

MASA's latest project, an employment database and business portal for people with disabilities, has stimulated considerable media attention and dialogue among employers and government stakeholders.

The web site is called BidChadna.mn. The database allows people and entrepreneurs with disabilities to create a profile that will enable them to seek employment or business partners, to promote their products and services, and to seek advice and consultation on disability matters.

The database also offers a one-of-its-kind feature in Mongolia for finding wheelchair accessible places in Ulaanbaatar. Using Google Maps, the database can display anyplace in Mongolia that are wheelchair accessible. MASA has entered information on 800 places in Ulaanbaatar and is in the process of assessing their accessibility. This feature,

which was dubbed the "Social Map" by the MASA board, is capable of displaying information of accessibility by location: by street, by khoroo, and by district. For example, if a person with disability was looking for a bank that was close to his/her home and that had wheelchair access, he or she can search by location and type of service/place.

The idea was conceived just over a year ago at the first board meeting of the current MASA board when Ms. Oyungerel, now Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, mentioned the difficulty that President Elbegdorj's office faced in finding a skilled person with disability to employ. She said President Elbegdorj wanted to make his office an "equal opportunity employer" and asked his staff to look for people with disabilities who would be interested and qualified to work there. While there were plenty of sources of information for donations and assistance, there wasn't a



MASA's roundtable discussion for major employers in Ulaanbaatar.



MASA workshop on employment database.

single easily accessible public tool for finding skilled people with disabilities. Within two months of the meeting, MASA's board developed a project proposal for an online employment database and business portal for people with disabilities. In July 2011, it was selected from among 700 proposals for State Department funding.

This database is the result of numerous meetings and discussions with disability organizations, a long period of data collecting, long hours of discussions on technical details and designs, and endless patience and commitment from the MASA board. The database is intended to grow as people and companies learn about it and enter their information.

In order to sustain the project in the future, MASA organized a fundraising event for the project in July and raised over 13,000 USD with the help of MASA President Mr. Jargalsaikhan. To launch the database, MASA organized a number of promotional activities, and on September 16, MASA held a launch/training workshop for the representatives of organizations of people with disabilities and also organized a job interview and resume writing training in collaboration with the Mongolian Talent network.

Following this workshop, MASA held a press conference about its project during which it announced a roundtable discussion for major employers in Ulaanbaatar to promote the database and employment of people with disabilities. HR

directors of many companies attended. Also in attendance were representatives of the government and parliament including Minister Oyun, Minister Oyungerel, MP Demberel and the head of the newly established department of disability issues at the Ministry of Social Welfare. The U.S. Ambassador to Mongolia, Piper Anne Wind Campbell also attended to congratulate MASA and express her hope that the attendees will join MASA in promoting equal opportunities in Mongolia.

All major media outlets in Ulaanbaatar covered the event. Odrin Sonin, Mongolia's most-read daily newspaper devoted a whole page to MASA's project and the issue of employment of people with disabilities. After the discussion, many government and non-governmental organizations expressed their desire to collaborate with MASA. MASA has been partnering with the Universal Development Independent Living Center for Disabled, an NGO headed by a U.S. alumnus, on this project and beginning in November the database will be sustained by this center.

MASA and Universal Development center are planning many more joint activities in the coming months to further improve the database, promote it to the public and recruit more companies to become members of the database.

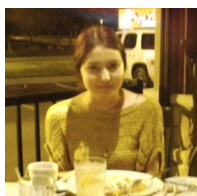
SUSI *Stories*



Bulgansaikhan, 20
SFS, National
University of
Mongolia

"Twenty bright girls from five very interesting countries living together on campus, while sharing their stories and culture, was the best part of this program. This has really made us sisters that will never be separated. Traveling through the cities on the East Coast and visiting Ivy League universities has really inspired me. In general, my impression about the U.S. wasn't really different

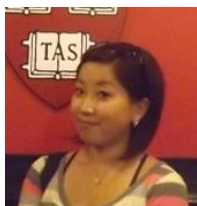
from my expectations. But it was shocking to see that such powerful country like the U.S. has a lot of racism and gender issues. A woman who has the exact same job as a man gets less salary than the man, and there are very few women in the parliament."



Amarjargal, 18
Institute of
Finance and
Economics

"This was the most unforgettable summer holiday that I've ever had in my life. Everything was new for me. It was the first time that I had ever been on an airplane and lived on an American college campus, especially with great women from five other countries. It was a great experience to learn about the American lifestyle, people's viewpoints, and to learn about different cultures from our

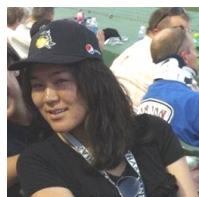
fellow participants. First it was so hard to break the ice. But we created very good friendships during the month."



Uemaa, 21
Mongolian
University of
Science and
Technology

"I had an incredible opportunity to stay with a host family during my time in the U.S. through the SUSI program. Staying with a host family during two weekends allowed me to learn about simple American life style and their daily routine. Although playing golf, going to the beach and swimming, seeing the zoo, which was the first time for me, were definitely amazing, they were not the

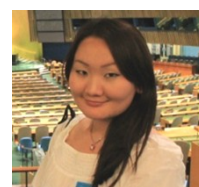
most important or memorable thing that I will remember for the rest of my life. It was the dinners that we had where we talked about the U.S. political system, the social security system and the attitude of most Americans of the view point of senior citizens that had the most impact on me and changed my mind."



Tungalag, 21
SMCL, National
University of
Mongolia

"The landmarks, starting from three of the most photographed monuments in the U.S. -- the Statue of Liberty, the Lincoln Memorial and the John Harvard monument -- to the sites related to women's issues were all so impressive. If someone could ask what was your favorite city in America? I would answer Boston. When I was walking along the Freedom Trail in Boston,

which is considered to be the one of the oldest cities in the U.S.A., visiting great historical places and taking many pictures of old architecture, the designs and colors of the buildings that have stood the trials of hundreds of years, I felt both inspired and impressed."



Enkhbayar, 21
SFLC, National
University of
Mongolia

"For five weeks, we lived a dream that we hadn't even dreamt about. At the same time we also had some sad moments, learning about the harsh realities that many face but many of us don't know about. However, what we learned from this program has given us the inspiration to work to change these problems. We are all going to work hard to change and prevent unfair and ugly treatment of women in our own societies. Because we learned that wherever we are, women's issues are universal and we are not alone in this battle. Our sisters around the world are also working hard to change their societies, sometimes at the risk of their lives.

A grant from the U.S. Department of State offered the opportunity for five of us from Mongolia and 15 other undergraduate women from four other countries -- Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, and Burma (Myanmar) -- to participate in a five-week immersion program focusing on women's leadership. We arrived at Saint Mary's College on June 16 and departed on July 20. Ten Saint Mary's students served as mentors -- sharing residence hall rooms and attending classes and excursions with us.

The program included a week of educational travel to Chicago, Illinois; Boston, Massachusetts; Seneca Falls, New York; and New York City, New York, where participants visited

Ellis Island and the United Nations. It concluded in Washington, D.C., where students attended a conference at the State Department, toured Capitol Hill, and, met with women who are influential on a national level.

The moment that we found out that we have been selected for this program was like a dream. The same feelings came to us in different places at different times. But these same feelings united us to represent our beloved country at this truly international program and to represent the women of the world and their dreams and aspirations.

Every woman at this institute brought a unique perspective to the table, and being exposed to these different views was an awesome learning opportunity. As we heard the stories of these women and their cultures we saw the many values we share and many that were different. But understanding the values of others was the best part of the experience. Because, as we grew to be friends, their happiness and sadness have also become ours. During the Arab Spring, where revolutions followed one after another in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and other Arab countries, my friends witnessed great changes in their countries with the sacrifice of their family and friends. Monks were protesting silently to free the nation of Burma from dictatorship. Finally the country began making progress towards democracy and my



The first day of the program, all the participants and mentors.

friends are now freer. The stories they shared made us cry, because it has also become our story, women's story.

Emotions... Where women are, there is always an abundance of emotions. Yes, we had days to cry and get upset over the problems around the world, but we also had so much fun sharing our goals and dreams while living a real American dream. We five girls from Mongolia had never experienced campus life before. So this was definitely the best part. Each Saint Mary's student mentored two participants, shared a residence hall room and attended all classes and excursions with us. We also spent two weekends with South Bend-area host families so we could experience the American family lifestyle.

Other highlights of the College's program were sessions by Saint Mary's and guest faculty on understanding cultural identity, analyzing stereotypes, developing intercultural skills, addressing violence against women, women's rights globally, and many more. There were also opportunities for volunteerism at one of five local agencies partnering with Saint Mary's (St. Margaret's House, the North Central Indiana YWCA, Hope Ministries, Sister Maura Brannick Health Center, and the Center for the Homeless). This really helped all of us to find out more about the part of United States, that we don't see from Hollywood movies.

It was cool to find out about girls from different countries; at the same time getting to know about the other girls from Mongolia was the best part. We have become very good friends, and we worked on a project together to give what we learned back to the society. We cooperated with one of the NGOs in Mongolia that works for young women's rights to create a photo exhibition about one day in the life of a teenage mother."



At the SUSI Graduation Ceremony, Saint Mary's college.

AMERICAN CULTURAL AND INFORMATION CENTER

The U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbaatar supports a small American style public library known as the American Cultural and Information Center at the Ulaanbaatar City Public Library. The Center's main goal is improvement of mutual understanding between the people of the United States and Mongolia. The Center contains reference works, periodicals, and a circulating book collection.

Free on-line reference searching and e-mail access enhance the ability of the Center to provide the most up-to-date information to their patrons. Events at the center for wide audiences give first-hand exposure to American culture, as well as provide opportunities to meet native English speakers and American speakers on various topics. American Centers are often used by USG alumni as venues for their meetings and events.

http://mongolia.usembassy.gov/american_cultural_information_center3.html

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/American-Corner-Ulaanbaatar/162640348874>

"Let's Talk About America" lecture series

Every Thursday at 4pm the center holds an English lecture for the public on a variety of topics. The speakers usually include U.S. Embassy officers or American citizens who are working in Mongolia. These lectures grant the participants an opportunity to deepen their understanding about the history, culture, art and nature of America and improve their language skills.

(Please note that this program runs from September until the end of June with a break in January.)

U.S. EMBASSY IN ULAANBAATAR

For information regarding general activities and news of the U.S. Embassy including: Key Embassy Officers, Embassy reports and speeches, Programs and Grants, Educational and Scholarship Opportunities, Alumni News and much more please visit: <http://mongolia.usembassy.gov>

To learn about Embassy's Alumni News and Activities please visit: <http://mongolia.usembassy.gov/masa.html>

U.S. Embassy also invites you to connect with us via Social Media sites.

 <http://www.twitter.com/USEmbMongolia>

 <http://www.facebook.com/USAinMongolia>

EDUCATION USA

Educational Advising and Resource Center (EARC) is a member of the global Education USA network of more than 450 advising centers supported by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

The EARC actively works in collaboration with the US Embassy in Mongolia. Moreover, the center disseminates accurate, comprehensive, current, and unbiased information about the US education system and scholarship opportunities to students and individuals who want to study in the United States.

Email: info@earcmn.org

Website: <http://www.earcmn.org>

Location: Sukhbaatar district, Student's street,
Building MKM-24, 1st floor,
Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Working Hours: Mon-Friday 09:00-18:00